



Q: What is a residential building setback?

A: A setback is “the distance a building or use must be removed from the lot lines of a property,” according to Snohomish County Code, Chapter 30.915.

Q: What kinds of setbacks do I need to know about?

A: There are basically three different types of setbacks affecting the location of your building:

Front Setbacks

County right-of-way	50 feet from centerline of County right-of-way. under 60 feet in width
County right-of-way	Half the width of right-of-way plus 20 feet as measured from centerline of right-of-way. Typically, this will mean the structure setback will be 20 feet from the front property line.
County right-of-way	20 feet from front property line. under 60 feet but within a recorded plat with curbs & gutters
Private road or	20 feet from edge of private road right-of-way or easement. (In certain private easement conditions, the setback can be reduced provided the criteria of Section 30.23.120 (4, 5 & 6) of the Snohomish County Code can be met. Check with Planning & Development Services (PDS) counter personnel for further information at 425-388-3311.

Side Setbacks

Residences	5 feet from property line.
Garages/accessory buildings/storage buildings/barns with no animals	5 feet from property line.

(continued on back)

Side Setbacks (cont.)

Garages and storage buildings over 2,400 square feet	May require additional setbacks, landscaping and permit requirements. Contact PDS Counter personnel.
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All barns of any size utilized for housing or feeding animals	30 feet from property lines.
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Rear Setbacks

Residences	5 feet from property line.
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Garages/accessory buildings/ storage buildings/barns with no animals	5 feet from property line.
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Garages and storage buildings over 2,400 square feet	May require additional setbacks, landscaping and permit requirements. Contact PDS Counter personnel.
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All barns of any size utilized for housing or feeding animals	30 feet from property lines.
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NOTE: The above setbacks are typical building setbacks for structures in residential zones, except for the Forestry zone (F) for lots 10 acres in size or larger. Other conditions and factors can modify the above listed setbacks such as property lines adjoining water bodies, rivers, streams, access easements on adjacent lots, steep slopes, plat conditions, etc. The complete format identifying all setback requirements is located within the Snohomish County Code, Chapter 30.23.

Q: What if I want to build a structure that will not meet setback requirements?

A: You will need to get a variance. (See PDS Bulletin #9, Variances.)

This bulletin is intended only as an information guide. The information may not be complete and is subject to change. For complete legal information, refer to the Snohomish County Code.